



## State of New Jersey

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October 22, 2007

TO: Chief School Administrators/Charter School Lead Persons  
Nonpublic School Administrators

FROM: Lucille E. Davy, Commissioner

SUBJECT: School Administrator Procedures: Responding to Critical Incidents

The safety of our school children is a primary concern for all of us. On July 13, 2007, the Attorney General distributed to local law enforcement officials model policies on the topics of bomb threats, active shooter response, school lockdowns, school evacuations and public information. The policies were developed by the School Security Task Force and included recommendations for school administrators' actions.

The department has developed the attached *School Administrator Procedures: Responding to Critical Incidents* to provide complementary procedures to those distributed to law enforcement officials. These procedures will enhance communication, cooperation and coordination, resulting in improved responses to threats and hazards. Attached to the procedures are model "Rapid Response" guides for active shooter and lockdown situations that, once individualized for each school, should be distributed to all staff to support consistent responses to emergencies. These procedures will serve to strengthen our emergency response system in all schools.

Each school district, in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1*, must develop and implement plans, procedures and mechanisms that provide for the safety and security of the district's schools. The plans must be developed in consultation with law enforcement agencies and be consistent with the format and content established by the Commissioner of Education. Additionally, an annual review and update, as appropriate, are also required. Therefore, within 45 days of this memorandum, each district is required to use these procedures as a model to revise, as needed, its existing procedures. Since the Attorney General's policies recommend that local enforcement officials invite school administrators into their annual policy review, this consultation should be routinely accomplished. Revised procedures and updated blue prints of floor plans of each school should be provided to law enforcement officials annually to support an efficient, coordinated response to all emergencies.

Additionally, district boards of education are required to provide in-service training to all employees to enable them to recognize and appropriately respond to safety and security concerns and be briefed in writing regarding any updates and changes to the school safety and security plan. Further, practicing the procedures is critical to the effective implementation during a crisis. We must all share the responsibility for maintaining safe and secure learning environments for our children.

LED/BG

Attachment

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